The AMERICAN SPECTATOR

A LITERARY NEWSPAPER

EDITED BY GEORGE JEAN NATHAN ★ ERNEST BOYD ★ SHERWOOD ANDERSON
JAMES BRANCH CABELL ★ EUGENE O'NEILL

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PORTRAIT OF AN OLD MASTER

by KENNETH CAMPBELL

Editorial Staff, The New York World-Telegram

WHEN the last company dick has sold out the last union local from within, the name of James McParlan, daddy of all industrial gum-shoe men, will lead all the rest. He has been dead these fifteen years and big business, to its sorrow, has not seen his like since. If he were with us now, he would waltz the industrialists through the valley of the shadow of Section 7A with jaunty ease.

McParlan hanged the Molly Maguires without benefit of Blue Eagle, and if he is forgotten now, it is because his story is too full of coal dust and bad whiskey to compete with the drawing-room detective tales of Philo Vance and kindred vendors of criminological tapioca.

In 1870 the Philadelphia and Reading Iron and Coal Company hired the Pinkerton Detective Agency to end the depredations of Irish hooligans who were not only festooning the culm heaps of Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania, with the corpses of company straw bosses, but were actually forming labor unions. The gang, which was probably nothing more than a few renegade chapters of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, came to be called the Molly Maguires.

The Pinkertons detailed McParlan, one of their operatives, to the job. He was a lean, well-muscled man of thirty-two, healthy and full of beans. At work spying out the Molly country, he was a frantic dancer of jigs and a vicious barroom battler—in short, a broth of a boy. On the witness stand he affected an attitude of of mousey piety and a righteous uprolling of the eye that gave him the perfect phiz of the company dick.

The Molly Maguires were centered in Mahanoy City, Shenandoah, Tamaqua and other settlements northeast of Pottsville. This is a country of somber hills gashed by gloomy ravines. In those days it was a region of killing labor at the bottom of mine shafts and of squalor and crummy living. Men worked twelve hours a day for six dollars a week. Clouds of coal filth brooded over the wastes like the wings of giant bats, and bestial mugs glowered from shanty windows. The battling micks gathered in saloons run by their leaders and there drank, cracked heads and did breakdowns, while frowzy females screeched accompaniment. The nights were filled with maudlin song and the bang of fire-arms.

Barrel whiskey was the tipple, and McParlan noted plaintively in his reports, which remain a Pepysian classic of private sleuthdom, that it was of such quality that it made his hair and eyebrows fall out and impaired his eyesight.

McParlan's first night in the Molly country was typical of many that he was to spend there. He turned up at Pottsville at the Sheridan House, run by a gigantic yahoo named Pat Dormer. The fiddler was playing his favorite piece, "The Devil's Dream." Without introducing himself he walked in and sprang into a fancy jig. There was thunderous applause and he was made welcome. Then he sang a song with an interminable number of verses and a stentorian chorus in which all joined:

"With my rigadum du, an' to hell wid the crew
Wouldn't help save our nation.
When I look back I count 'em slack
Wouldn't join our combination."

On that night he acquitted himself with further honors by breaking the nose of a man whom he accused of cheating him at cards, and Dormer forwarded him up-country to Shenandoah with introductions to certain Mollies.

He worked in the mines for a while but soon found that he could learn more by hanging out in saloons. He accounted for his supply of ready money by giving out that he was in receipt of a navy pension, fraudulently obtained. To this he added a story that he was a fugitive from justice, having trampled a man to death in a Buffalo grain elevator. He blathered night and day in bars, and drank strangling doses of whiskey. But while his drunken companions snored on the floor, he scurried off to his room, where he wrote long reports to the Pinkerton office.

Soon he was secretary to a Molly group. A dozen or more murders rested with something less than the weight of eiderdown on the consciences of the Mollies and little by little he gathered the information that was to drape the gallows with the enemies of the Philadelphia and Reading Iron and Coal Company. He lived with the gang leaders and actually shared a bed with one of them, and his information would make a modern steel baron's mouth water. His Molly associates included one James Kerrigan, who had gained the nickname of Powder Keg by tossing a keg of gunpowder into a fire when the miners refused to make room for him one cold morning. Another pal was one of four Mollies who engaged William "Bully Bill" Thomas, a Welsh miner, in an eye-gouging and groin-kicking fight in a stable, where two large draught horses were killed, but not Bully Bill.

Finally the Mollies began to suspect McParlan, and on one occasion a dozen of them assembled at the Shenandoah station to meet a train on which he was expected to arrive. All had sledge hammers concealed under their coats. They planned to greet him with disarming effusiveness as he stepped from the car, hustle him off into the middle of a group, and quietly reduce him to pulp. He was warned and took another train.

Although he stood in danger of death at every turn, he brazened it out and stuck until he had all the evidence. Then he disappeared, to reappear on the witness stand to unfold a tale that hanged something like a dozen Mollies, including Jack Kehoe, the reputed leader.

On Dec. 10, 1905, former Governor Frank Steunenberg of Idaho was blown to pieces by a bomb attached to the gatepost of his home at Caldwell, Idaho. It was a labor war and the Pinkertons gathered fat retainers for furnishing guards and spies to the industrialists.

A few days after the murder of Steunenberg a quailing wretch named Harry Orchard was arrested for the crime, but denied it. Within a week he was visited in his cell by a portly and dignified, but withal jolly old boy with an Irish burr and an imposing paunch from which dangled a large Elk's tooth. Time had not dulled the sparkling eye nor taken the ring from the merry chuckle.

McParlan, for it was indeed he, seated himself, fixed a cheery eye on Orchard and asked him if he had ever heard of the Molly Maguires. Orchard knew little about the Mollies, and McParlan diverted him with a lively account of the ensnarement and hanging of the enemies of the Philadelphia and Reading Iron and Coal Company. If there was any intimation that the enemies of the Colorado copper interests might enjoy the same fate, it was soon merged with a gentle exposition of things religious—King David, to be exact—the big gun who let the little fellow do the dirty work and take the blame.

Orchard was soon in tears and Charles A. Pettibone, Charles H. Moyer and William D. "Big Bill" Hayward, all of the Western Federation of Miners, were soon indicted for the Steunenberg murder.

At this point, however, fate served up an indigestible dish to our hero. This dish was Clarence Darrow. Moyer, Hayward and Pettibone were acquitted.

McParlan died in Denver, May 19, 1919, following an operation for an infected foot. No man has ever gathered so many of whatever laurels await the private dick.

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Editorial Announcement

When we started *The American Spectator* just two and one-half years ago today, we told you that our purpose was simply to entertain ourselves and, we hoped, our readers, with a rather new type of literary-critical paper. And we told you at the same time and in our first editorial that when and if we got tired of the job, which involved no plans for any financial profits whatsoever and which had only a little belletristic diversion in view, we would, as we expressed it, "retire to our estates." Well, we are tired of the job, although it has been a lot of fun, which we feel from your generous response you may have shared. So we are merrily concluding our performance.

And here comes the strange part of it. At this moment *The American Spectator* enjoys the largest circulation of any literary and critical periodical in the United States. In the single month of December (the last for which complete returns are in) we jumped more than 6,000 in circulation over the previous month, which had shown an increase over the month preceding of 1,500 copies. What is more, subscriptions are now actually coming in at the rate of 175 a day, and they have been coming in at a rate of from 125 to 150 daily for the last three months. So, probably for the first time in the history of American periodical publishing, we are giving up—simply because we all want to do other and newer things—a property that has been constantly and steadily on the up-grade and that apparently has a very substantial commercial future. This isn't guff; it's the truth!

We wish to thank you for liking our efforts so much and we hope that maybe you will miss our paper a little.

Au revoir,
THE EDITORS.

LAST OF THE GUERILLA ARTISTS

by DONALD L. MILLER

ALMOST every art-lover on the Pacific Coast knows and loves Giovanni Muschi. "Last of the guerilla artists," Idwal Jones called him back in the early months of 1925. At that time he had been invited to Los Angeles to decorate Zuka's Paris Inn, and shortly afterward met Joseph Urban with whom he began working in the motion pictures for one hundred dollars a week. The old San Francisco crowd shook its heads and uttered epitaphs—their last bohemian was gone, and bohemia was dead. But now, after several years as an art director and judge of beauty contests, Muschi is a guerilla artist again, painting everything from the walls of saloons to imitations of masterpieces, and living a vagabond life that is unusual in these days.

I visited him often at his studio in an old building on Broadway in Los Angeles. What a place! It was a barren room, dark and gloomy. At one end of it hung an excellent copy of a Van Dyke, and at the other end a saloon painting filled with naked women. He had a rickety cot in the dump, two old tables littered with rubbish, a few decrepit chairs and some wooden boxes. He had painted his windows so they resembled those of some antique church. Under a table amidst a débris of magazines, letters and drawings was a stack of photographs of beautiful women, all inscribed to him. In a corner was a cardboard box filled with yellowed newspapers containing outlandish stories about him. There were a few canvases leaning with their faces to the walls—his friends had walked off with most of his paintings—and a half-finished bust in clay standing on a wobbly platform.

Muschi hadn't enough money to afford electric lights so he illuminated the room with candles, and his gas had never been turned on so he wore his overcoat to keep from freezing. Nevertheless, he was a happy man.

When I first met him, his studio-rent was three months overdue, the landlord had threatened to throw him out, he ate one meal a day at a restaurant in which he had done some painting, and he borrowed his cigarettes from his friends.

A week later he obtained a job painting the battle of Château Thierry (without any dead men) for a sheriff, a member of the American Legion, for which he received five dollars a week, a new pair of glasses, and the privilege of dining each night with the detectives at the police station.

Before I left the West, he had been offered a job painting the scenery for the stage shows at the Cotton Club in Culver City. He accepted it. Muschi can paint anything.

During my stay in Los Angeles I had many conversations with Muschi, one that was particularly interesting; for he told me of his youth, his adventures, and the "good old days" in San Francisco. While a boy, in Switzerland, Muschi had studied art. At the age of thirteen he ran away from home, going to Turin where he studied at the Academy. At that time Marinetti, an Italian born in Africa, arrived in Italy, young, handsome and wealthy, and surrounded himself with a group of younger men. He started futurism. Muschi was with that crowd in Milan. Later he visited Paris, and there he caroused with artists, frequented the same cafés as Verlaine, and painted nothing. He lived in Gola's studio one week, Borgo's studio the next, and in somebody else's studio after that. Three times his father, who had established an Italian newspaper in San Francisco, sent him money to leave Paris; but each time he squandered it on one all-night brawl for his artist-friends. Finally he did come to San Francisco, almost immediately becoming friendly with Jack London who liked him because he was such a crazy lad, and because he could speak very little English.

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In San Francisco Muschi soon became famous. He painted imitations of the masters to get money to survive, and he painted the things he wanted to paint to present to his friends, or give to some café owner for a few weeks' drinks. More than Muschi painted, he drank, spending every night at Bigin's, the rendezvous of every writer, musician, painter and boozer who lived in San Francisco. There was Christodoro, Jack London, Benvenuti, Bitter Bierce, George Sterling, Tina Modotti, Malone Blaine, Ray Boynton, Tofanelli, Sadakichi Hartmann, John Petrina and numerous others who are dead or who have disappeared, many of them committing suicide. Bigin opened his restaurant with the help of half a dozen artists. He was a painter himself, a handsome fellow, a gentleman who neither smoke nor drank but who loved the company of bohemians, much the same as Jim Moore who ran the Cabaret Francis in the old days in New York.

His establishment ran from Montgomery street through to Kearney street. It was a large place filled with wooden tables and chairs, and the walls were covered with paintings by the artists who frequented the café. Bigin was always very nice to artists. Any painter could always get something to eat at Bigin's. Gathered there, journalists, musicians and millionaires were nightly mafficking. Sorantini, coach of the opera company, or someone else with talent, usually played the piano, not the tin-pan music one hears in beer gardens today, but Strauss waltzes and Chopin nocturnes. Almost each night a rich Greek came to the place; he had invented a game of roulette, played with the tops of the sugar bowls, and lost purposely to the artists. Sometimes an artist would come with a new painting to show his friends, or a writer would bring his latest piece to read to the crowd. Sadakichi Hartmann used to read his poems, standing half-way up the stairway that led to the second floor, and George Sterling would follow him. There was always gaiety at Bigin's, always a spirit of camaraderie. As Muschi talked of the place his eyes lighted up and his voice was filled with longing. He made me wish to discover such a drinking establishment.

"Is it possible to have a café like Bigin's today?" I asked.

Muschi looked forlorn, and shook his head. "There aren't any more men like Bigin," he said. "The restaurant people of today would slit your throat for an extra nickel. Bigin never gave a damn about profits. He loved artists. You could sit as long as you liked in his place without buying anything. Today, when you quit spending, they throw you out on your ear. The bohemian spirit is dying out. Romanticism is dying out. The artists of today think too much of money. When they get together that's all they discuss: how much did you get for this painting, and what do you think they'll pay for that article you wrote? And today all the artists are jealous of each other, and knock each other. It wasn't like that at Bigin's. We were all good friends, always willing to help each other, always doing things to help the other fellow find himself. Today there's no place where a young man can go and talk to successful artists, and learn some of the things he needs to know, and that it would be so easy for them to tell him. A young man must fight it out alone. In those days we had some help. Now even the old men have become a crowd of snobs. They snob each other and they're snooty to the young men. They're hard to get together. They aren't interested in helping youths. Fraulich, who lived for three years with Jack London, and gave him all his information about the sea, is trying to start a place like Bigin's in Hollywood, but it won't succeed, for there aren't any artists in Hollywood. Hollywood ruins artists. Money ruins artists. Women ruin artists. Everything seems to ruin artists today. Perhaps, though, there aren't any more artists to be ruined. I don't know. But I do know there's nothing today like there was in those old days in San Francisco. Something's wrong."

Muschi asked me for a cigarette. After lighting it, he went on: "The candles are burning down, and I am rather thirsty. Some other day I will tell you about Coppa's restaurant, but now let us go and get ourselves some wine."

Although Muschi is pessimistic, he still lives the same kind of life he lived in his San Francisco days, and attempts to hold at the Fior D'Italia a court like that which was once held at Bigin's; but aside from Sadakichi Hartmann, who will never die, Johnny Fabris, an artist and photographer, Leopold Fleischmann, an interesting journalist, and a few others, all he can surround himself with are Hollywood sign painters and the usual tribe of quacks and fakers who hang around bohemian restaurants imagining themselves intellectuals and stealing other people's ideas.

Nevertheless, bohemia will live as long as Muschi's heart beats.

SAILORS, BEWARE!

by HOWARD WOLF

THE United States Navy can be had by the Reds! And any time they want to take it over, too! From Commander V. L. Kirkman, U. S. N., comes the tip on just how it can be done. Not an impartial authority is Commander Kirkman, for he's so blind to the faults of the American Communist organization that he actually believes the party's pamphleteers are incomparably persuasive in their eloquence and the party's feminine attachées overpowering in their pulchritude. And to the best of our recollection that goes beyond anything that the *New Masses* has ever contended.

Yet there is no question that Commander Kirkman's high position in the Navy gives an authoritative ring to anything he has to say on this subject. So reasoned the House Committee Investigating Un-American Activities, at any rate. That's why the congressmen called Kirkman and other officers as witnesses, and were startled to hear that attempts by Communists to spread mutiny and rebellion among the nation's sailors and soldiers are causing these gentlemen to view the situation with "real concern."

At first this testimony reminded us of the reported Communist plot to capture Hollywood, a slapstick classic which climaxed with the Tarzan of the cinema roaring characteristic denials at the police chief who had accused the ape-man of mating with a Bolshevik. But then we read on and learned the truly serious nature of the new menace. It's a hellish campaign carefully planned and supervised from Communist headquarters in New York City, Kirkman deposed, and other witnesses asserted that the Gotham group is taking its orders direct from Moscow. As to the nature of the Big Threat, perhaps we had best allow the Commander to tell his story in his own words. We quote from the records of the House committee:

"Small groups of say two men and three girls will come aboard ship with the regular crowd of visitors and sightseers. Men of this group will circulate about the decks, stuffing their handbills into boats, behind ventilators, and so on, where members of the crew eventually find them . . . Meanwhile, the girls of the group—chosen for their good looks—will be picking out promising appearing enlisted men, engaging them in conversation with the object of making dates with them ashore and working on them there to convert them to the 'cause' and thus gain a recruit within the ship's company."

The inference is clear. To retain the loyalty of our sailors we must keep them in ignorance of Russian theory. Give them free access to the Soviet pamphlets and there'd be danger of their stampeding into the ranks of the hammer and sickle party as tars of another day made for the waterfront saloons. Expose them to workouts by the Communist cuties and all varieties of honor would be lost.

Personally, we hadn't realized that the Navy is so disaffected that installation of handbills and handmaidens behind ship ventilators is all that is needed to touch off revolution. And from what we

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have seen of Communist pamphleteering, we still don't believe that the movement boasts a writer capable of wooing a single sailor from the perusal of *True Story* magazine or the New York *Daily News*. While from what we have seen of the Communist sisterhood we are quite certain that the cause can't show one moll gifted with sufficient pulchritude to flutter the pulse of the most susceptible tar.

Nevertheless, there undoubtedly is danger now that Commander Kirkman has rashly spoken in a way that may put ideas into Red heads. Let the Bolsheviks sign up a few high-class writers of real behind-the-ventilator stuff, along with Miss Moscow 1935 and a couple of Broadway choruses, and the fleet will be theirs. Will be, that is, unless statesmen prove alert to our peril and move swiftly to fight hot stuff with fire. Drafting Tiffany Thayer, Donald Henderson Clarke and the Goldwyn girls to the colors should save the day so far as the Navy is concerned.

The Army's peril isn't quite so immediate. On the day of the Kirkman testimony, in fact, Brig. Gen. Alfred T. Smith, chief of the War Department Intelligence Service, made affidavit that army plots of the Communists "have not met with a great deal of success." Let War Department chiefs continue their wise policy of keeping army posts free of boats and ventilators and that old Stalin will be permanently foiled.

WE CAN'T COME BACK

by T. PHILIP JOHNSON

DURING those long, arid years when Prohibition was keeping in temporary exile thousands of Americans who had refused to accept bathtub gin as a substitute for bonded liquor, another law was working quietly to make their self-imposed residence abroad permanent.

When Uncle Sam decided to saddle an income tax on the American people, he left to each citizen the task of computing his own annual resources, his exemptions and, finally, the blood-money due the Bureau of Internal Revenue. With a few exceptions, stay-at-homes made, and still make, the best of the situation. Fear of criminal prosecution and long terms in prison has insured a steady flow of dollars from saving and checking accounts to the coffers of the United States Treasury.

Those of us who sought refuge abroad during the Great Drought soon lost our respect for the long arm of the Law, which seldom extends across the Atlantic Ocean. Some of us paid our taxes once or twice, some of us never; but the man who, after three years in Europe, still turns up at his Consulate to pay concrete homage to his government is so rare a bird that he is looked upon as a Caspar Milquetoast.

The tax-dodger at home beats the government to hang on to his earnings; to do it with any degree of safety he makes use of plain and fancy figuring far more intricate than the mere reckoning of his tax. Abroad, the evader cheats on Uncle Sam simply because he is too lazy to do any calculating at all. The former lawbreaker is a deliberate swindler; the latter is a poor devil who falls out with the income tax collectors because of the obstacles that stand in the way of paying them their due.

A wise British government protects its lazy subjects by collecting income tax at the source. The Britisher at home or abroad may kick about paying a baby lion's share of his income to His Britannic Majesty's collectors—and make no mistake, he does; but he pays willy nilly, and neither desire to cheat nor laziness can change matters. The United States, on the other hand, optimistically assumes that every one of its citizens is both honest and a human adding machine; the taxable citizen is advised, through the newspapers as a rule, to provide himself with a tax blank, figure out what he owes, and come across. That the taxee may live in a remote section of a foreign country, far from the nearest Consulate and its tax blanks, is no concern of the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Lest the American in his native lair envy those of us who have strayed and are now beyond the reach of the tax collector, let him examine our situation as I am about to set it forth. There is, to be sure, no practical means whereby the United States government can bring back the defaulter who has taken refuge abroad. And as the exile cannot be brought into court, his income cannot be taxed at its source (so far as I can learn), for he is entitled to his say before the law. From our vantage points overseas, whether they be in France, Spain, Italy or the Insull Peninsula, we can thumb our noses at Uncle Sam and say, "Come and get it."

So far so good. But having been cheated out of its money, our angered government sooner or later sets itself to the pleasant task of making our lives in Europe as unpleasant as possible. This task invariably is achieved quickly and with complete success by the simple process of refusing the refugee a passport as soon as his original identification paper has expired. After two years of gamboling on the continent, the exile suddenly finds his passport is no good. He hies himself to the nearest Consulate to request a renewal and what does he find? A blacklist a yard long, and somewhere between the letters A and Z his own name.

At this point, the exile becomes one of the sought-for evaders. In whatever country he happens to be when his passport runs out, in that country he will remain unless he decides to return to America and face the music—possibly to the tune of a long term in jail.

Fortunate, indeed, is he who is caught in France or Spain or in any other civilized country where the foreigner within the gates is expected to provide himself with the *carte d' identité* of the land and, having done so, need never again produce his passport. But even then his plight is not a pleasant one, when it is remembered that the average European nation is the size of a large state in the United States. To be in Paris on Derby Day is like being under arrest in New York when a world championship heavyweight fight is taking place in Philadelphia. Yet I know more than one American who has been chained to France for anywhere from two to twelve years simply because Uncle Sam is determined to get back his own.

Only the other day, a friend of mine who paid his tax in America last year was exulting because now that he is abroad he has the Bureau of Internal Revenue where the hair is short. He turned down the advice I gave him then, but he will remember that refusal to his sorrow before many years go by.

There is over here still another class of American income tax dodger—I have the misfortune to belong to it, too. In this class are those who are gainfully employed in Europe and whose incomes are earned, entirely or in part, in businesses in no way indebted to the American government for their support.

This class is composed almost entirely of deliberate tax beaters. Most of us would willingly pay taxes upon American-derived incomes if only the United States would make it a little less difficult; but payment of blood-money upon earnings already highly taxed in the countries of their source is another matter. The demand for a share in our hard-earned profits is too great a toll to exact for the privilege of calling ourselves Americans, and I have yet to meet a man who has paid it. Over here, we pay stamp taxes, property taxes and taxes on gross incomes before we are even allowed to figure our net earnings; then when we have computed what is left to keep the wolf from the door, we pay a net income tax; and if the remainder looks at all enticing, that old bogie, the surtax, appears. These amounts are paid regularly if grudgingly; but when the Bureau of Internal Revenue sends its vicar in Europe, in the form of a Consular servant, to demand a share in the loot, we tell him to go to hell.

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STRAVINSKY: 1935

Author, "Composers of Today," "From Bach to Stravinsky," etc.

by ***DAVID EWEN***

WHEN, twenty years ago, Igor Stravinsky visited America for the first time, he was the reigning genius of modern music. Although he was only past thirty, he seemed destined with the force of his volcanic personality to reconstruct the language and idiom of music and to direct it through new and greater channels. Revisiting America once again, Igor Stravinsky today—in the prime of his life—finds himself in his artistic senility, producing music which is without spine, character or vitality.

To contrast the music Stravinsky created before Germany entered the War with his efforts after the signing of the Armistice is illuminating. That a hot-headed rebel should change into a cool reactionary is interesting enough. But that, at the same stroke, an inspired composer, who created his art with an uncontrolled passion of genius, should have begun to turn to formulas and clichés in his composition, makes the metamorphosis doubly significant. Here is one of the most interesting phenomena of modern music: What has converted an unmistakable genius into a mediocrity?

The musician will no longer question the importance of Stravinsky's music of his middle period. From his "Scherzo Fantastique" (1908) which revealed a technical grasp that is instinctive and an instrumental coat of many colors, through the stirring "Sacre du Printemps" (1913), Stravinsky revealed an imagination that had no boundaries, a vitality that was fresh and electric and—we see clearly today—a musical beauty as sensitive as it was original. His was a pen that was bewilderingly elastic: brutal in its satire, tender in its loveliness, volcanic in its drama, deft in its humor. The Berceuse of "L'Oiseau de Feu" (1910) and the Introduction of the Sacrifice of the "Sacre du Printemps" (1913) contain some of the most poignant pages in modern music: Stravinsky could shape melodies in designs of rare beauty. And who has not succumbed to the malicious sparkle of "Petrushka" (1912) with its often rowdy and irrepressible humor and the bite and sting of its satire?

The Stravinsky who created the early series of masterpieces—"L'Oiseau de Feu," "Petrushka," "Le Sacre du Printemps," "Le Chant du Rossignol"—was not only a remarkable experimentalist who enriched the harmonic baggage immeasurably, who endowed rhythm with a new plasticity and variety, and who enlarged the scope of musical expression beyond the dream of his contemporaries and predecessors, but he was also an inspired composer who dressed his experiments with the garb of greatness. Our age has produced no music more important—artistically as well as historically—than "Petrushka" or "Le Sacre."

II

The contrast between this early remarkable music and the compositions which followed "Renard" (1915) is striking. In his later works, Stravinsky deserts the wealth of his harmonic language and turns to chord-combinations of schoolboy textbooks; his formerly dynamic and uncontrollable rhythmic force is now hemmed in; his originality yields to a stiltedness of melodic invention and to a shallowness of musical development. Theorists call this phase of Stravinsky's career "neo-classical." Stravinsky attempts to write in the style of Händel by producing fluid, lucid, transparent music—forgetting that had lucidity been the only characteristic of Händel's music it would hardly have persisted until our day.

One ruefully compares the often sublime utterances of "Le Sacre" with the hollow and pompous "majesty" of "Oedipus"; the contagious glitter of "Petrushka" with the forced and tired humor of the "Capriccio"; the inexhaustible zest and vitality of "Le Chant" with the wan, effete and spineless "Apollon Musagète"; the high inspiration of "L'Oiseau de Feu" with the emptiness and wind of the Violin Concerto. There are moments—such as the air of Clytemnestra—which, in the later works, remind one of the earlier Stravinsky. These moments, however, are few and far between. "Les Noces" represents a ridiculous attempt to give artistic expressiveness to the tympani—the most uninteresting of orchestral instruments; this composition does not even possess the rhythmic electricity which one might expect from a work written for percussion. "Oedipus" is a larger and more ambitious canvas and, though occasionally Stravinsky here stabs blindly at sublime speech, the work as a whole is nevertheless a marked deterioration of its composer's talents. Some of the choruses are written with so heavy a hand that they seem to be the product of a pedantic academician. Not even the writing for the orchestra is distinguished here: it is without muscle or sinew; it is flabby and undistinguished.

The "Symphonie des Psaumes," for all its pretentions, rings false; it lacks honesty; it is as cold and as lifeless as a slab of uncarved stone; it is all too obviously the product of a mind that is toying with theories, and not of a heart that feels musical messages intimately and sensitively. The "Apollon Musagète," the "Capriccio" and the Violin Concerto are, without mincing words, bad music. "Apollon" is an attempt at crystal clarity in contrapuntal writing—but it is as false a music as our ears have heard. Its artificiality and lack of conviction are apparent from the earliest bars; and it is as frigid as an iceberg—and as ugly. The "Capriccio" is an attempt at humor—a sort of Scherzo for piano and orchestra. But the humor misses completely; it has none of the chuckle and bright face of "Petrushka," for example. As for the Violin Concerto, it is so formulistic in its outline, so ingenuous in its selection of ideas, and so clumsy in its construction that it plainly stemmed from a composer who has lost all perspective and ability at self-criticism.

For the past twenty years, Stravinsky has been strongly hinting in his musical accomplishments that his genius had warped mysteriously. Now there can no longer exist any doubt. His last works—the "Apollon," the "Capriccio" and the Violin Concerto—are definite signs that their composer, as a creator of first importance, is through.

III

The question now arises: What has brought about the sudden death of Stravinsky's one-time soaring inspiration? What poisoned his genius at a time when it seemed certain that he was destined to become one of the immortals of musical history?

The different quality of the earlier and later music of Stravinsky gives us the key to the problem. The music of "Petrushka," "Le Sacre" and "L'Oiseau" is indigenously Russian; it stems from the same soil that produced Glinka, Borodin, Moussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakoff. The later music of Stravinsky, however, is elegantly European. The truth of the matter is that the period between the last of his masterpieces, "Le Chant du Rossignol," and the first of his insignificant music, the "Octuor," was marked by the composer's migration from Russia to Paris, where he settled permanently. A little ashamed of his Russian uncouthness, he tried to adopt the suave elegance of a boulevardier. And not only in his manners, but in his music, too. The later music of Stravinsky is generally marked by the stifling of all Russian influences and the adoption of European manners in composing. Stravinsky failed to realize what Dostoyevsky (in refusing to satisfy a life-long dream to settle in Paris) and Turgenieff (in insisting upon returning to Russia once each year) knew so well: a Russian artist, robbed of his spiritual heritage, can produce only vacuous and characterless art.

Moreover, in Paris, Stravinsky began to visit salons and became captivated by the tinkling theories to which young composers were

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giving voice. Music must be "pure"; it must be unemotional; it must be restrained and aloof; its form must always be elegant; it must be classical.

To Stravinsky, these clichés had a pleasant sound, and he succumbed to them. As a result, he who was a genius began to imitate and be influenced by those who were his rank inferiors. I do not think that musical history has another example as pathetic as the case of Stravinsky who, endowed by Fate with a musical language uniquely his own and which was nothing short of inspired, began to copy the feeble style and message of composers whose towering superior he had always been. And then, by dwarfing his own talents, rapidly assuming the pygmy stature of the young French composers whose theories he admired.

Had Stravinsky clung to his Russian idiom and permitted it to grow and develop naturally along the lines suggested by "Petrushka" and "Le Sacre" he might have been an immortal. The music of his second period clearly shows flowering and growth in a definite, clear-headed direction. As it is, he presents the sorry aspect of a composer who at the age of thirty touched greatness, but who at fifty sees dotage. Transplantation is often dangerous to sensitive plants. In the case of Igor Stravinsky, it ruined the flower and withered the root.

PYROTECHNICAL PROGRESS

by RICHARD SHERIDAN AMES

THE nautical phases of Joseph Conrad were never easy sailing for me. Nevertheless, thousands of landlubbers who wouldn't know one end of a boat from the other read Masefield, Tomlinson and McFee and leap nimbly over the rigging of the MM. Nordoff and Hall's "Bounty" without the aid of a glossary. These aqueous sophisticates must acquire their wisdom vicariously, for most of them have never set foot on a windjammer nor rounded the Cape by any means other than a disordered nightmare. Like myself, their real knowledge of the sea consists in knowing how much to tip the steward or how to wangle a seat at the captain's table.

On the heels of Conrad, modern novelists employ enough technical material to supply susceptible readers with a fairly liberal education. Only a few of them have the sporting sense of Ernest Hemingway, who provided his admirers with "Death in the Afternoon," a handsome manual which paraphrased the *leit motif* underlying his major work.

The exegetists of Joyce supplied numerous Baedekers for the halt who seriously meant to read "Ulysses." Miss Stein has been as helpful as possible in an effort to make her linguistic quinces palatable, without actually translating. T. S. Eliot implies that a hearty adherence to the Roman church would simplify matters for his intellectual converts. Jolas and Pound provide assorted canticles about themselves and their work, but journeyman authors are less kindly intentioned.

Thomas Mann's monumental "Magic Mountain" is replete with *materia medica*. Fitzgerald's "Tender Is the Night" has a plenitude of abnormal psychology. The *Saturday Review* currently employs a psychiatrist to analyze the literary case histories of Faulkner and Caldwell for lay readers. Gide invites investigation of inversion beside which Proust is simple stuff. Virginia Woolf, after bringing in several gushers, now has her trickle of consciousness under control, but she asks readers to be pretty nimble about Einstein time concepts and heterosexuality. For awhile Rebecca West was a self-constituted guide to the laboratory researches of Pavlov, with a little Riviera psychoanalysis thrown in.

Kay Boyle has her own coy legerdemain. The late Lawrence had plenty of Indian magic and seminal mysticism for those still on the threshold of an ABC approach to life. Cabell invented his own bright lexicon of the unfamiliar; Jeffers, his raw-Pacific and gnarled-cypress symbolism. Really to understand the industrial novels one needs an I.W.W. card or a bear-hug from Emma Goldman. The earlier Evelyn Waugh was great stuff if you knew your Cavendish.

In better days a Harvard degree, plus a *Wanderjahr*, one scorching misstep with a chorus cutie, marriage and the birth of one's heir were sufficient preparation for the reading of novels. One read about birth and death, love and domestic relationships, romance and ambition, salted with local color and peppered with some occasional stunting by literary acrobats like Henry James. The reading of fiction was simple and entertaining. You brought enough of living to a book to make it your own, and reading was a pleasure, most often a relaxation.

To-day there is a difference. The better novelists tout specialized fields of knowledge; they probe and delve, often with a very personal idiom. Some are deliberately obtuse, many are vexingly iconoclastic, and nearly all challenge thought and compel unceasing attention or the reader is quickly bogged.

An excellent example was Charles Morgan's best-selling "The Fountain." Half a century ago the author would have written it as a tear-jerker, proper stuff for a lady with bon-bons in a hammock. As published, it was deliberately termed a "philosophical novel," yet subsequently transformed into a motion picture its sponsors hoped it would entertain millions of fans. It didn't, for the old-fashioned love story had become a ponderous problem in emotional calculus. Likewise, Scott Fitzgerald's "Tender Is the Night" was serialized as a "romance," frothy as it was with incest, frustration and clinical forget-me-nots.

The last decade saw the astonishing popular success of bulky "outline" books and what was deceptively called, in some instances, non-fiction. The learned professors were pleased to note in this trend the upturn in national culture and mass intelligence, whereas it might be safer to assume that the newer fiction was simply going over the heads of the masses who were compelled—when too much Kathleen Norris and Temple Bailey threatened diabetes—to turn to Wells, Durant and the Abbé Dimnet.

The intelligent fiction reader, however, is beset with problems. With all the talk about the paucity of genius in the twentieth century, there is plenty of readable fiction. There is, in fact, too damned much of it. One can only sample, and since critical mentors are untrustworthy, even tasting is difficult. The reader who is not a hypocrite tries to glean a modern novelist's substance. He must familiarize himself with his style, his vocabulary and his background-technique, if that is a new province. When all the adjustments are made and the initial travail is over, he may discover that some critic or book club gave him a bum steer. Or, even if the book is worth-while, after wrestling with some seven hundred odd pages he may feel justly fatigued.

There seems to be a conspiracy among publishers, writers and reviewers—few of whom have to read the stuff—to glorify bulk and put a premium on auctorial virtuosity. No writer is worth his salt until he does a trilogy. Willa Cather's "A Lost Lady" now receives critical condescension because of its brevity. "The Folks" is admired, like "Anthony Adverse," principally because the novelist can hold head under water for seven hundred or more pages.

The reader is the silent and long suffering partner in this fiction racket. Literature no longer seems to have its troubadors, who entertain briefly and go on their way. Instead, every writer aims to be a Paganini concocting *moto perpetuo* variations on the printed page. A simple theme is buried under an avalanche of cadenzas and virtuoso authors have the arrogance to believe that endless improvisation and pyrotechnical tantrums imply high creative seriousness and the stature of genius. Life is paced differently and before long the reaction must set in against the deliberate exhibitionism and loquacity of the padded, encyclopædic novel.

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BIOGRAPHY OF THE BOOK-JACKET

by M. KLEIN

AN illegitimate offspring of the big arts, the book-jacket has followed in the footsteps of its elders. Like most of them, it was born out of a kind of necessity. It came into the world as a plain dust-cover, designed to protect good bindings. At first it was dressed in a coarse, homespun garment made of heavy wrapping paper. It was necessary to trim it in order to reveal the face of the book. Later it was furnished with ready-made round holes which enabled the title to peek through.

Then it began to be decked in more colorful costume. Its favorite dress was the goldenrod yellow of the Macmillan Company, which was much imitated. Covers stamped with various prints or designs were also used. More delicate garments, made of flimsy, transparent fabrics, were added to its growing wardrobe. All of these were in fashion during the eighties and nineties of the past century.

Just before the century closed, the book-jacket came of age. Like painting, which had been a handmaiden to its sister arts, the jacket was the servant of the decorative book-binding. Like painting, which struck out for itself and eventually outshone its mistresses, the paper-cover has practically crowded artistic bindings out of the picture.

But the jacket did not win its independence without a long struggle. Even when it was decorated, it was merely a slavish imitation of the design on the cloth-cover. Finally, it overthrew its oppressor and instituted a despotism of its own: it completely revolutionized the *status quo,* stripping the binding of all ornaments and lavishing them upon itself.

The development of the three-color process in printing opened the way to the renascence of the book-jacket and helped to make the first quarter of the twentieth century the Golden Age of the Book Blurb.

This was an era of colorful representational art. In its simplest form it was merely a reproduction of the frontispiece of the book—a vestige of the days before its enfranchisement. At last it broke all artistic bonds with its ancestors and began to display original paintings describing incidents or scenes of the story.

However, the book-jacket did not rule its native land for very long. Its reign was soon broken—not by an internal revolution but by an imperialistic invasion. Its dominion was conquered by the forces of an avaricious commercialism. The advertising possibilities of the paper-cover were soon realized and all of its resources were exploited. The illustrated jacket became a poster whose purpose was to catch the eye even at a distance. It was used for brilliant window displays and book-counter advertisements. It left nothing untouched; it broke into the most sacred temples of bookland gaudily to bedeck aged and venerable classics, and even religious books.

Nevertheless, its artistic advance was not halted, even though it came to serve a purely propagandist end. As a matter of fact, its development was accelerated.

As a poster it continued to illustrate an episode from the book. But this incident had to stand out more boldly. It therefore became necessary to select a spectacular event—or to create one by distortion and exaggeration. The result was a deliberate straining for effect, which destroyed the earlier simplicity and restraint. The new form attempted to dazzle the eyes by melodramatic scenes displaying an extravagant and flamboyant fancy. This might be called the period of the Baroque in the art history of the book-blurb.

At this period a lurid jacket could actually "make" a book; it was even rumored that the success of "Main Street" was due to a not inconsiderable extent to its paper cover. In the relentless search for the sensational, the book "dummy" occasionally got into hot water. A famous law case occurred in England in 1922 in which Sydney A. Moseley was granted an injunction against his publisher who produced the author's book, "The Much-Chosen Race", with a caricature of a Jew on the jacket.

The heyday of the Baroque was ultimately destroyed by its own excess. The conventional action-jackets became eye-sores and, in addition, were so much alike that none of them would stand out in a group display; they were all so colorful as to form a blazing background for whatever unadorned blurbs strayed into the fold.

Various reactions resulted, the earliest of which was discernible in the Borzoi books. Knopf abolished pictorial jackets and substituted intricate design and decorative type against a solid color background to create a sort of Rococo style. Other movements sought their inspiration from earlier periods, as in the use of a simple picture which did not refer to a specific incident in the book but caught some symbolic representation of the book as a whole.

The really drastic innovations, however, came as a consequence of the development of "modernistic" art. The advertising possibilities of the geometric "modern" in decoration as applied to the book-jacket were realized at the end of the twenties; the tremendous advantages of this form of art in creating an outstanding poster effect soon became apparent.

In order to create this effect it was necessary completely to divorce the jacket from the book itself; and thus, in order to serve the interests of its imperialistic master, the blurb was completely cut off from the ties which bound it to the contents of the book, "Dummies" began to appear without any symbolism at all; abstract design, detached from any representational purpose, came into use. Excess marked the first experiments, but order and discipline were soon instituted.

The history of the book-jacket, however, threatens to end upon a tragic note. Its very extinction is threatened by a new process of printing which enables oil paintings to be reproduced directly upon the binding, and which will merely be covered with cellophane. And so, under the dictatorship of the powerful commercial interests, the *status quo* in bookland may again be reversed and the book-binding set up as the "dummy" ruler.

II

The book-jacket has a literary as well as an artistic history. With the imperialistic pillaging of bookland, the literary treasures of the jacket were uncovered. Meanwhile, the language of the great commercial invader was assimilated into the native tongue, and the heathen jacket was christened the Blurb, a name bestowed upon it by Gelett Burgess who defined the term as "self-praise, to make a sound like a publisher."

The period of the Baroque in the art history of the blurb was paralleled by the period of riotous Romanticism in its literary history. The romantic blurb enjoyed a tremendous popularity. Its challenging adjectives were splattered all over the jacket—on the front, the flaps, and the back cover. It spread everywhere to leave its indelible stamp upon book advertisement, book catalogue, and book review alike. In the early twenties it announced a literary millennium; in the words of R. C. Benchley it heralded the advent of the "Extra-Heavy Golden Age of Literature." Led by that intrepid adjective "vivid," blurbing became so very dazzling as to blind the prospective reader by its glare. However, as this continued, the electric adjectives—"sparkling," "intense," "stirring," "dramatic," *et al*—burnt themselves out to become dull, dingy, feeble, flickering, stereotyped expressions.

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The reaction which set in as a result of this gongoristic excess occurred almost simultaneously with the reaction against the Baroque in the art-jacket. Signs of this revolt were evident among the critics, who began to review—and slander—the blurb on the book instead of the book itself. As a result of this criticism, the George H. Doran Company in 1923 presented the review copies of its volumes in a chaste jacket bearing only the title, author, and publisher upon it—although their regular jackets were retained for the trade. With the introduction of psychoanalytic technique, one critic uncovered a V-complex among blurbists, as evidenced in such adjectives as "vibrating," "virile," "vital," "vigorous," not to mention the dauntless leader, "vivid." Still another reaction was the formation of an anti-blurb society by English novelists.

The decisive revolution in the later history of the art-blurb came with the influx of modernistic art. The literary-blurb, however, has not kept pace with this progress: the new developments in literature have not, as yet, been exploited by the book-jacket.

Yet it seems likely that the potentialities of the new literary forms will not go unnoticed. These new forms can open entirely new vistas to the literary-blurb, comparable to the influence of movements like cubism upon the artistic jacket. The methods of Gertrude Stein and E. E. Cummings—to mention but two examples—applied to the book-jacket could accomplish miracles, even to the extent of rejuvenating the old adjectives by giving them a new freshness and vigor. Indeed the most dazzling adjective of them all can be put back into reputable currency simply by applying the method of Gertrude Stein to the latest prospective best-seller, *viz.:*

> And after this what's vivid
> what's vivid after this, after
> this what's vivid and what's
> vivid after this and after this
> and what's vivid and after this
> and what's vivid after this.

Such devices would be particularly fitting when used as blurbs for books which employ the same mannerisms. Thus E. E. Cummings' latest book of verse might be blurbed in somewhat the following fashion:

> n(o)w
> this
> howheehee
> dis(guised cunning) book
> mm S
> is slapped: together with; haS tE
> !
> at
> which (shal)lpounceupcrackw(ill)tens
> of
> DEfEndINgC
> riTIc!S iN
> -visiblya mongmil(lionsindig-
> nant readers?wha tm) eani ngl (essNess Un
> rolli(ngl yS troll s (who leP o pulat-
> ionscr
> ybolo
> ney.

Unquestionably the really significant innovations in the literary blurb will come from such sources.

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LAUGHTER IN THE BREADLINES

by GEORGE H. FREITAG

I WAS up to see the editor of our local newspaper here in Canton, Ohio. Every day he conducts a half page devoted to readers' views on various subjects, such as what the city should do about garbage disposal and why doesn't the city enlarge the courthouse, and numerous other subjects common to the average newspaper readers' page. The editor had several times before published small letters of mine, letters in which I described the carrying away of a dismantled Christmas tree or bringing home a big fat turkey for Thanksgiving, or some insignificant civic problem—just the type of material conservative newspaper editors like to publish. But for the past year my little contributions to the readers' page began to take the form of bitter pieces, of strife and unemployment, and these letters the editor quite nicely was refusing.

This time, however, I had said a great deal more about unemployment. So going into his office I said, "Here is a little piece about unemployment; see if you can use it."

The editor took the contribution out of my hand and began reading. (Editors read so fast; they scarcely begin before they are through. I enjoy watching editors of long experience read.) When he had finished, he looked up at me. He looked at my clothing, at my hands, and the way my hair was combed. Then he said, "I can't understand why you can't say something with a laugh, something humorous for a change; not this continuous stream of unemployment-machine-age claptrap. Why, people would *actually* read you if your stuff was funny, but you're too damned serious. You don't have a funny bone in you."

Then he turned around to his desk His desk was full of papers. In a moment he turned to me again. I was still standing where I was when he stopped looking at me, holding the piece about unemployment in my hand.

He said, "If you were an old man, if you were even fifteen years older, I wouldn't say so much about your gloom. But you are young, not more I'll bet than twenty-five, and here you are talking about strife and starvation."

Then he turned around again and I went out of the office, out of the building and on to the street.

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I didn't know where to go. I had been on every street in the city and everywhere it was the same. With my paper about unemployment still in my hand I walked very slowly. I must make people laugh, I said to myself. I must be humorous; the public wants humor, wants to be made to laugh. So I began to laugh. I laughed at an approaching blizzard, and at abandoned buildings, and at hundreds of men, like me, walking the streets, walking the highways, hunting for work, hunting for bread and afraid of their shadows. I laughed at myself walking the streets laughing at the men. I laughed at beggars. Judas, it was funny, this unemployment! Honest to Pete, it was a scream. To think that people wanted to be made to laugh, to be made to laugh at what? Well, I don't know exactly, unless, as I said, it was breadlines and the men losing their courage, if that is funny.

But I laughed anyway; laughed right out loud and everybody could hear me and I didn't care but kept right on laughing and laughing. I laughed until I got home.

At home I saw a truck in front of the house, and some men were carrying out all of the furniture, all of everything we owned, because my father was unable to meet the payments. My mother and father were standing at the door, watching the men, watching all of the furniture, their furniture, being carried away. And for a moment my heart went out to them. I became bitter. But all of a sudden I thought of what the editor had said about laughter and humor, so I began laughing at the top of my voice. I went out on the porch laughing, saying to the men, "Well, if you haven't taken my pencil and paper I've got a funny story to write; one that'll set all of the public to laughing and laughing," and the men and my parents looked at me, thinking I was crazy, but humor is humor.

Even if I would have died on the spot I'd have laughed, just thinking of the swell article the editor was going to get. And I went upstairs and found pencil and paper, and while I sat writing I laughed and laughed, holding my sides.

I laughed until I got so sick at my stomach that the only thing I wanted was food, something to eat, a real honest-to-goodness meal.

Oh God that was funny!

RISE AN' SHINE

by HORACE REYNOLDS

WE drove up to the Negro church in the country. All the churches in the Northern Neck of Virginia, both white and colored, are in the fields, not in the centre of the villages. Small cars were parked in numbers around the church, black shadows in the moonlight that filtered down through the tall spruces.

A naked electric light bulb on an iron bracket sprang from the wall over the doorway, a gargoyle ugly with twentieth century ugliness. Under its harsh light sat, stood, lolled, colored men and boys. They had a dressed-up, Sunday-night look. Immediately we drew the fire of their eyes. Made suddenly conscious of our whiteness, we were a little timid about going on: we felt strange. By an effort of will we made our way through them and mounted the steps.

Inside we found the entrance barred politely but possessively by two fat, rather handsome colored women in white, wearing white gloves. They were the ushers for the evening, and they looked proud and serious, like children earnestly playing a game. They bore money plates lined with green billiard-table felt, filled with dimes and nickels, a few dollar bills, conspicuous, on the top. We paid our fifteen cents apiece and were conducted to seats in the rows reserved for white people. These rows were marked off by bows of green crêpe paper.

Colored people, like Greeks and Italians, like lots of electric light. The church was rectangular in shape with a mansard roof, white walls, and painted grained pews. The crude Gothic windows were color discords, harsh with small panes of red, green, yellow, indigo—strong primary colors which vibrated harshly one against the other. There was no altar or pulpit; what would have been the the transept of a cruciform church was taken up by a retiring room on one side, an exit on the other. Between them was a small raised platform on which were placed four worn, dingy, upholstered chairs. On the left against the wall of the retiring room was a piano with both banjo and ukulele attachments.

In front of the platform, before a small table at the end of the nave, sat a short, fat, loose man with a bland face and unctuous smile, mopping his bald head with a handkerchief. He was Brother J. Hines, manager of the Southern Harmony Quartet of Richmond, Virgini, and our master of ceremonies. His face was the kind that reminded you of the faces of lots of people you have met before. Another colored man played hymns, rather dolefully, on the piano.

The quartet entered, four Negroes in pin-striped seersucker suits of the same light pattern. They filled the waiting chairs, smiling black faces above the huge Negro hands which Covarrubias has used so effectively in his drawings. Then with a final mop of his head Brother Hines rose to begin the concert.

Ostentatiously he waited for quietness, then with a lift of the arms summoned us all to our feet. The bass went to the piano to displace the playing-parishioner, and we sang "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name." The hymn over, we continued standing. Brother Hines said a prayer, while the quartet hummed softly the beautiful hymn, "Have Thine Own Way, Lord." Against the beauty of that softly hummed chant, Brother Hines seemed to speak with more sense of style than was usual to him; the music gave his words rhythm; he fell into the cadences of the English Bible. But he dared too much. His thanks to the Lord "that we are in our right minds this night here in Irvington, Virginia," produced a mood that warred against the emotion created in us by hummed chords of purest pianissimo. But the lovely hymn triumphed over his unconscious humor.

Then we sat down to hear Brother Hines introduce the first number, "Rise and Shine, the Lord Is Coming Fast." The four black men rose and sang. Their voices, muted before in the hymn, now were full, harsh, throaty, vibrant with energy. The rhythm was stimulating, rousing the blood; the mood joyful. The song was exciting with syncopation and the very close harmonies with which the Negro must have anticipated by many decades the daring dissonances of modern music. It was full of an early Christian paschal joy, glowing with simple gladness:

Oh, rise an' shine, for the Lord is coming fast;
For Jesus is here, and the cloudy day is past.
What joy in my soul since the Comforter has come;
He's brighter than the Morning Star, He's sweeter than the honeycomb.

The church was packed: all the seats were filled, men stood in the aisles and at the back, fans waved, a baby cried, a sleeping child muttered in its dream. The audience was awakened. Eyes brightened, heads swung, feet tapped time, emotion ruled the blood of every man and woman there, thickening the mood which had moulded them into a single responsive unity. The whole audience moved to the rhythm sung by the four men on the platform. It is one thing to hear spirituals in concert hall, or over the radio or on the phonograph in one's living-room; it is another and a far more moving thing to hear them sung in rapid rhythm by untrained singers in the midst of their own people.

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II

Song followed song in rapid succession: "Tell It"; "I Am Living in His Care"; "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child;" "Peter on the Sea"; "Glory, Glory, Halleluljah, When I Lay My Burden Down". Most of them were sung unaccompanied; occasionally, however, the bass left his place on the platform to go to the piano, where he both played and sang. There were songs of the coming of Jesus, of biblical story, of a mother's love. The words were simple, with much repetition. Seldom was there a memorable line; it was the rhythm and melody that mattered, not the words.

Most of the songs were gay; they may have been sublimated sadness, but if so, the resultant joy had remembered little of the sorrow from which it sprang. A radiant Jesus, a glorious Heaven awaited the simple singers of these lays. Song after song described that heaven, and the terms in which it was imagined were simple. There were golden slippers, long white robes, starry crowns, and streets of gold on which to walk so apparelled.

Brother Hines introduced "Good News" with some remarks about the Depression. "In these days when the Depression is so high, it's good to hear good news." The song began with a statement by the leader: "There's a starry crown in heaven, I know", which was taken up in order by the baritone, tenor and bass. Then they all swung *con brio* into the refrain, "Good News, the chariot's come, and I don' wan' to leave you behind", sung antiphonally, the leader's "good news" being answered immediately by the other three in unison, voices leaping after voices until the four united on "An' I don't wan' to leave you behind"

Now fully warmed to their singing, the quartet began to dramatize some of the songs. Arms and hands were lifted to heaven, eyes shone, black faces were transfigured, as if they saw in the air the heavenly joys imagined by generations of spiritual-singing ancestors. They walked, marched, talked, knelt, prayed, feasted, rose, sang with the Jesus of their dreams and aspirations. First the tenor, then the bass, left the platform to wander about the aisles of the church, singing, gesticulating, matching actions to words. Excited by the emotion in his listeners, the leader held against the piano's steady vamp, the high, prefatory, solo "Oh" which introduced many of the verses until the blood pounded in our temples in sympathy with what must have been his breathlessness. Then when the voice finally glided down in lugubrious *portamento* to the first word and tone of the verse, and the leader breathed, one could almost hear the audience relax.

A solo by Mr. Parsons, the tenor, interrupted the steady flow of the part singing, "When They Ring the Golden Bells", an old-fashioned ballad, a song that must have graced the program of many a minstrel show in the days before the movies. The bass accompanied him on the piano in the old pre-jazz style of accompaniment, fancy grace notes, decorative broken chords, sentimental *tremolo,* and, at the end of phrases, the inevitable cadential movement up or down from the fifth to the third in chromatic thirds. In the old syncopated rise-and-fall rhythm of the 1890 ballad the tenor sang of the joys of hearing the bells of heaven rung, after one has crossed the "Jerdan" and joined the "Glory Halleluyer Juberlee".

Then to the spirited rhythms of "Do You Want to be a Lover of the Lord?", obviously a great favorite with the audience, the quartet sang itself off the platform to a much needed rest in the retiring room.

III

After the short intermission a sombre note was sounded in "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" Again the leader sang alone the opening line, but this time the voice which had before created for us the joys of heaven was heavy with sorrow and sadness. This time the wail in the prefatory "Oh" was no stunt, vamp-supported: it was a cry in the wilderness; in it all the clotted misery of Russian or Armenian folk-song. The words were impressively simple:

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Where you there when they marched Him to the Cross?
Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?
Were you there when He rose from the dead?

But the leader's cry that separated the asking of those tremendous questions took you to the foot of the Cross, to the tomb, to the Resurrection.

Brother Hines had stopped fiddling with his notebook, watch and pencil, and rose to change the mood. Very, very apologetically he introduced the three secular songs that followed. "Someone in the audience has requested them (I felt guilty). . . . We have consulted the pastor. . . . There is nothing immoral in these songs." Brother Hines doth protest too much. From his protestations one would have expected songs heavy with the innuendo for which the Negro is noted; instead the songs were as innocent as a fairy tale.

The first of this group was the "Watermelon Smilin' on the Vine". I have heard the Fisk Singers and quartets from Hampton Institute and Tuskegee sing it, but never have I heard it better sung than it was that night. And the audience loved it. On the line, "The white folks are so foolish to leave it hangin' on the vine", a wave of pure, child-like pleasure rippled over the colored people. Amused glances were cast to the section where sat the white folks; racial differences were enjoyed. The beat was irresistible, the joy on the four black faces infectious. *Con amore* they swung into the rapid chorus:

Honey is sweet.
Bacon is good,
Possum is mighty mighty fine.
But give me, Oh give me,
Oh how I wish you would,
That watermelon smilin' on the vine.

The applause at the end was thunderous. As it died reluctantly away, a gaily dressed, young, high-yellow gal switched down the centre aisle, leaving a cloud of scent behind her. She spoke to Brother Hines, and to our delight we had the song repeated.

The secular group concluded, more religious songs followed, among them "Sleep on Mother", a gay triumphant song to the air of "Swanee River" quickened in tempo, slightly changed here and there in interval and cadence. Then Brother Hines introduced the pastor of the church, a heavy-set man, unattractive in appearance, but a natural orator. He said simply something about these songs springing from the sorrows of his people; but outside some one cranked an old Model T Ford, and the noise of its racing engine blotted out his low, impressive voice.

The concert concluded with the beautiful "Bye and Bye, Bye and Bye, I'm Goin' to Lay Down This Heavy Load". The leader, singing the solo passages, wandered down from the platform, out the rear door into the summer night. From the back-stage of the spruce grove came his distance-softened cry: "I know my robe goin' to fit me well, for I tried it on at the gates of Hell".

Then a short benediction from the pastor, and the concert was **over.**

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THE FIFTEEN-YEAR LAG

by RANDOLPH BARTLETT

AN INFALLIBLE system whereby an institution of learning can be assured constantly of being exactly fifteen years behind the times has been devised by Dr. Irving Brett Jackman, Chancellor of Southampton University. He has submitted it to the presidents of a score of the better-known educational establishments of America, and they have endorsed it unanimously. This appreciation encourages Dr. Jackman to predict that his system will be adopted by all important colleges as soon as he completes his treatise, which will present the plan in detail.

The Chancellor points out that a comprehensive survey of conditions has proved that fifteen years is the ideal distance in the rear of modern thought for a university to maintain itself. In the past, however, there has been no standardization, no cooperation among educators to arrive at and adopt the norm. Those few Boards of Regents which have approximated the perfect lacuna to any degree of consistency, have done so by the exercise of instinct rather than intelligence.

While Dr. Jackman abhors the recognition of chance, as a light evasion of mathematical analysis, he takes that short cut and says those colleges were simply lucky. But even these fortunate ones, he avers, have been embarrassed upon occasion by discovering from time to time that they have lapsed into a differential of as much as sixteen and one-half years. Almost before they knew it, they were being looked upon as antiquated.

Conversely, there was the instance of one of the more important universities of the eastern seaboard, whose governors were distressed last year to discover that their institution was being stigmatized as a breeding ground of radical principles. It was only after several months of intensive investigation that the embarrassing fact was revealed—they were only eleven years and a fraction behind current thought. The cause, innocent enough to all appearances, was the establishment a few years previously, through a specific legacy, of a Chair of Social Research Among the Catalans of the Balearic Islands. These Catalans, it was divulged, because of their perpetually rebellious tendencies, are known as the Irish of the Mediterranean, and through this influence an insidious poison of revolt against things as they used to be was infused into the scholastic pabulum.

The fifteen-year lag, which is the technical name Dr. Jackman gives to his motivating principle, was not arrived at arbitrarily or painlessly. Before reaching his conclusion he became involved in a number of acrimonious controversies. He found on Morningside Heights a coterie of restless and fiery minds, ready to fight to the last ditch in support of their conviction that twelve, or at most thirteen years, was long enough for any university to remain behind the march of modern ideas. In Boston and Syracuse, on the other hand, he encountered die-hards who declared this to be rank scholastic heresy, and those centres of learning held out for twenty to twenty-five years. But Dr. Jackman enjoyed the advantage over both factions of basing his calculations upon mathematics instead of emotion. He produced his graphs and his opponents were silenced.

"The capital difficulty," says Dr. Jackman, who is nothing if not a liberal, "lies in the nature of the resistance to independent, extra-collegiate conceptions. Resistance is imperative, of course, but it must be imbued with less of the spirit of excommunication. Let us take an absurd illustration, and suppose that in the world of unlettered thought there should arise a movement to reject the Dravingian formula of experience, and substitute therefor the theory of experimentation. The obvious, automatic, almost chemical reaction of all right-thinking schoolmen would be to treat the movement with utter contempt. I would not say that this contempt is unjustified, but it is not the correct attitude for the educator. He should not allow such elemental disturbances to intrude into his cloister.

"My system eliminates both the justification and the provocation of this emotion. If an idea is contemptible, my device will establish the fact, leaving not the slightest margin of error. Yet, like all fundamental principles, it is alphabetically simple. It is nothing more nor less than a card index.

"Assuming that such a fantastic idea finds its way into circulation, this year, 1935, I simply make a note of its essential characteristics on a card and file it away under the date 1950. Now I am able to forget it, ignore it completely, relieve my mind of all speculation concerning it. The system has been put into operation and will take care of it. In 1950 these cards will be taken out of the cabinet and read at a meeting of the Board of Regents. It will then be found that most of the subjects have been completely forgotten, and that the abstracts are meaningless. These memoranda are then to be promptly destroyed.

"On the other hand, there are almost certain to be a few ideas which have been discovered, in the fifteen years, to have some valid bearing upon philosophy, economics, science, and so forth. These cards will be turned over to the members of the faculty in charge of the subjects to which they relate, with instructions to adjust the courses to admit their essence. Almost no research will be necessary, because in the interim sufficient data will have been produced by their proponents to provide ample material for text books and lectures.

"Also, the relation of the system to university finances is important. Fifteen years after any class has been graduated, a certain number of the alumni have achieved commercial or professional success, have acquired wealth. To them we must look for our endowments, contributions, legacies. The very future of education demands that the affections of such alumni shall not be alienated from the alma mater. They form the solid substance of our social fabric. It would be inimical to their interests, displeasing to their sound conservatism, and a confession of our own weakness, if we appeared to them as pursuing the evanescent glow-worms of fantastic ideology.

"When the alumnus has passed the fifteenth anniversary of his graduation, however, it seems that he regards his alma mater less as an institution for the dissemination of knowledge than as a social organization. He is increasingly interested in class reunions and decreasingly concerned with curricula. So the fifteen-year-old ideas can be slipped quietly into the study program without arousing his enmity."

Dr. Jackman vehemently denies that his plan was suggested by a study of the deliberations of the United States Senate.

SERVANTS OF GOD
No. 30

Associated Press Dispatch:

MILTON, Mass.—Rev. Harold Cutbill of the Third Religious Society of Milton, Unitarian, wants his congregation to enjoy itself—and the Third Religious Society will view some fan dancing. Rev. Cutbill said:

"I see no harm in a classical fan dance."

The dancer will be Miss Aleta Ray from one of the ERA entertainment units.

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THE PROBLEM OF THE TSK

by LEWIS HERMAN

A LOT has been written about the radical innovations that James Joyce has introduced into literature. Stream of consciousness, Ulyssian parallelism and Walpurgisnacht symbolism, among the many, have all been fully discussed by Joyce's commentators. Yet nothing has been mentioned about his pioneer work in the matter of depicting the orthography of the common human grunts, yawns and ejaculations of pain, joy and anguish. Through the medium of juxtaposing the correct letters. Joyce has given us the correct spelling of the human exclamations together with animal sounds, and the clangs, hisses and bangs of a city street.

Heretofore, when a cat cried, it "meowed". But, with Joyce, a cat will "mkgnao" or "mrkgnao". And he distinguished the animal noise from the human attempt at it when he had Bloom call for his kitty with the word "miaow". The difference is in the feline gutteral that Joyce depicts by inserting "kgn"

The ordinary writer, in describing a person yawning, either makes the bald statement that "so and so yawned" or else resorts to the ineptly standardized "haw-aw-aw". Joyce, however, with his hyper-sensitive ear for sounds, insisted on experimenting with the yawn. The result was Davy Byrne's yawn realistically spelled "iiiiiichaaaaaaach". The "ch" in the middle and at the end are touches of pure genius.

In most cases, Joyce's spelling of sounds is perfect. But he has incorrectly recorded the "tsk," an exclamation which is more common, perhaps, than any other in the entire world. In one instance he did as most authors would do. He referred to the act without spelling it. He says of Mrs. Breen, "her tongue clacked in compassion." A bit later he has Bloom voice a "tsk", but he spells it "dth".

Actually, there has been advanced no standardized spelling for the "tsk." The manner in which it is arbitrarily spelled here is the most common because the characters in the daily comic strips use it that way, particularly Emmy in "Moon Mullins." Each author adopts his own spelling for the word. The result is confusion.

When the occasion calls for a "tsk", the perplexed author leans back from his typewriter. He reflects calmly. He tries to recall authorities on the spelling of the word. He tries to bring back to mind classical uses of it. Homer, Ovid Shakespeare, Hugo. None furnishes him with a clue. So he contradicts the muse by crossing out the situation that called for the "tsk".

Let us dissect the "tsk" as Joyce must have dissected his classic yawn. The expression is one that indicates either sympathy or disgust. This paradoxical quality of the word in itself makes for a difficult standardization of its correct orthography. The true "tsk" is universally recognized as starting on the letter "t". Although Joyce disagrees with this premise and starts his "tsk" with the letter "d", all of the other users of the word start it off with "t". This "t" sound is obtained by releasing the tip of the tongue from the inner faces of the front incisor teeth, intermittently, the while a small quantity of air is sucked through the interstices formed by the tongue as it draws back from the teeth.

The divergent theories regarding the spelling of the "tsk" are caused by the question of what comes after the "t". Is it to be a mere sibilant "s" that peters out in rapid diminuendo? Or is the "s" sound to be cut off short and the "k" sounded added? Some authorities hold to the latter sound as being orthodox. Others advocate the plain unembellished "s". Kipling favors the double "s" Still others, the extremists of the more modern school of left-wing orthographers, suggest strongly the substitution of "ch" for "k", thereby formulating the word "tsch".

Another variant is the word "tut", a mutation. Although the original conception of "tut" was the "tsk", usage has drawn it away entirely from its original pronunciation until it has become "tut tut tut", a distinct offshoot of "tsk tsk tsk". The nuance, the subtle difference, should be quite obvious to the honest orthographical man of research.

The only rule accepted by all is that the "tsk" should start off with a "t". Why not let it go at that? Continued experiments with the spoken letter should prove that practically the same sound is obtained from the single "t" as is obtained from a "t" with an "s" or an "sch" or a "k" added. Actually, these appendages are silent. Galsworthy uses a double "t". But the additional "t" is tautological. "T-t-t" would be the ideal word. It would be easy to remember. It would solve the problem of the "tsk".

CIVILIZED TOWN

by ERNEST PAYNTER

IF communities are products of heredity and environment it is understandable why San Pedro comes close to being a civilized town, probably the most civilized in Southern California. By "civilized" I mean holding a spirit of live and let live, physically, mentally, and morally. While San Pedro is a geographical portion of Los Angeles, no San Pedran is so lacking in pride as to admit that that mammoth warren of fanatical realtors and religionists is his home, and the place keeps up a constant battle to retain its identity.

The first whites to lay successful claim to San Pedro and its adjacent territory were Spanish Grandees, to some of whom the King of Spain granted "all the land they could see between the highest hill and the ocean." This spacious gesture resulted in a considerable overlapping of boundaries, but a few thousand acres in those halcyon days mattered little and the questions were settled by horse races or over jugs of wine.

The early Yankees who came there—ordinarily by sea—and married into the aristocratic Spanish families were a hardy, adventurous breed, ready for fight or frolic, while caring for money only as a means of furthering their immediate pleasures. Life went along graciously, with the masters feasting, loving, dancing and drinking; while their peons, or lower classes, did the work on the ranchos. Still, those laborers seem to have fared better and had more opportunity and reason for festivity than do our industrial and agricultural peons of today.

It has taken generations for the offspring of those lordly ones to lose the greater portion of their heritage of leisure and courtliness; even now they make but mediocre go-getters, since they retain some gentlemanly instincts and prefer to transact business during business hours and in their offices, holding their homes to be places for relaxation and entertainment.

By environment San Pedro has been a seaport as far back as our history goes. Cabrillo landed there about 1542; some say Drake visited it during his circumnavigation of the globe; Dana mentions it in his "Two Years Before the Mast." At present it is the home port of the U. S. Battle Fleet, while in merchant tonnage it ranks among the first three or four harbors of the country.

The population is cosmopolitan and, I believe, at least sixty per cent foreign born or but one generation removed from foreign parentage. The constant mingling of a dozen nationalities, with interchange of languages, ideas and habits, with not infrequent marriages, has helped educate the people, rendering them tolerant and destroying the dogma that all virtue resides in the natives of any one country. Excepting Negroes and Japanese, and these but seldom, I have never heard people condemned on racial lines.

In some manner most everybody there is connected with the sea, either directly or through trade. This, too, has exerted a civilizing influence on the place, for while sailormen are a hard-living, rowdy lot, they have been to far places and seen out-of-the-way things which they discuss in their ports of call, providing shore folk with

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an understanding of the other fellow's point of view and method of life. Moreover, many sailormen, growing tired of deep-sea work, have settled in San Pedro, becoming longshoremen and fishermen, professions that have a background of adventure which the workers carry with them. Their youngsters are familiar with foreign countries from having heard their parents discuss them, and with foreign customs from direct observation.

It is essentially a workingman's town and without a wealthy class, so that, lacking prey, it is pretty free from high-pressure salesmen and other crooks. Located on hilly ground, with level land bordering the waterfront only, it has escaped the blighting influence of great factories with their robot labor and standardized ideals, and is barren of smoke-belching chimneys even during boom times. While longshoring and fishing are arduous jobs, they are intermittent, giving the laborers two or three days off each week. San Pedrans have learned to spend this leisure in a thoroughly urbane manner: drinking, feasting, singing, loafing and playing in the sun.

II

The current readjustment has not missed San Pedro but it does seem to have caused less turmoil than in other towns of the same size. The inhabitants, never having been accustomed to large incomes, had not the same amount of slack to take in as was necessary for the dwellers in such places as Long Beach, grown rich from oil, or San Diego, prosperous as the gathering-ground of Tia Juana and Agua Caliente riff-raff.

With some fifteen thousand Navy men pouring possibly two hundred thousand dollars a month of real money into a place of about fifty thousandfi it is small wonder that landlords, merchants, pleasure-vendors and payday sweethearts are still doing well.

It has, of course, its down-and-outs, at least, its downs: mostly ancient sea-farers. However, in a dozen places along the water-front are scores of old boats, fitted with banks and stoves and either temporarily tied-up or abandoned, to which these human derelicts have access. The tide brings them firewood, an hour's work a day will provide money for food. Should that hour not be available, a fishing line is always handy; this failing, a little panhandling will enable one to exist. During the course of months spent among these people I have yet to hear of one going hungry for so long as a day.

Where it is possible to buy a five-pound fish, six hours out of the sea, for five cents, where for seven months of the year fires are used solely for cooking, clothing is kept to the minimum compatible with decency, and a three-room furnished house rents for ten dollars a month, people have opportunity to relax from the mad scramble of making a living, and to indulge themselves in the niceties of living itself.

Since San Pedro and Long Beach have the same basic racial heritage—Spanish—the difference between being and not being a seaport explains, in all likelihood, why San Pedro is civilized and has considerable beauty, while Long Beach, five or six miles away, is probably the second most uncivilized town in Southern California.

Less than in any other place I know of do the police consider themselves censors of private morals. They seldom break in and enter to investigate other than crimes of violence and prefer either to ignore drunks, unless too boisterous, or to escort them home. Ladies of joy exercise their talents without molestation, provided they do it judiciously. As in all seaports, numbers of these delightful creatures flit to and fro, but so long as they keep reasonably sober in public, ply their trade in proper places only, and act in a seemly manner on the streets, they need fear no harm.

As a whole the people take their religion joyously, not as the dour mess in which many American communities wallow. They demand only that it not interfere with pleasure and that it fulfill its function on Holy Days, at marriages, christenings, and deaths.

Even the Protestant clergy behave in a fairly decent manner or get out. While the K.K.K. was at its vilest—it never had much influence in San Pedro—a minister of the gospel accepted from his pulpit a money donation from masked members of that band of thugs, but feeling against his action was bitter and he soon decided that God had called him to new pastures. Another, who started an evangelical racket and tried to cash in on it by the usual method of blackmail, was forced to depart under threat of suit for libel. This, in itself, is an evidence of civilization, when other nearby localities accept slander and extortion as sanctified prerogatives of the howling dervish species of Ambassadors of the Almighty.

The Catholic priesthood have, of course, little difficulty in meeting this civilized religious attitude, merely asking that their followers attend services as often as practicable, contribute to the Church, and bring up their children in the Faith.

Not long since, Father Cornelius was invited to the launching of a new fishing-boat. He attended, drank wine freely with other celebrants, bestowed a blessing on the craft, and went home.

The vessel started out on her trip, but had to be towed back into port when the engine broke down. Baptiste, the owner, still under the influence of a dozen dippersful of wine, hurried to the priest's home. Father Cornelius came to the door and asked, "What's wrong, Bt'tis?"

"My boat, she no run. I tink mebbpe you no putta de Holy Ghos' inna de good place. You come down an' fix. T'morrow I mus' fish."

Father Cornelius returned to the waterfront, had several more glasses of wine, and again blessed the craft, with a special benediction on the engine, which, Baptiste tells me, thereafter ran satisfactorily.

To some it may seem that this shows religion as having an undue hold on the people; but to me and, I feel sure, to the entire assemblage, Catholics and Protestants alike, the blessings were merely part of the pageant that should start a boat off in life.

The hilarity that marked the ceremony, particularly the recalling of the priest, and the chuckles with which Baptiste and his cronies relate the incident, convince me that in religion as in more important things San Pedrans come pretty close to being civilized.

A NOTE ON VOTE STEALING

by CHARLES ALLDREDGE

Editorial Staff, The Alabama Journal

VOTE stealing in certain Alabama counties is very similar to the game of shinny, a card game much played by the colored gentry. One of the rules is that it is all right to cheat, but not to get caught. It is not a matter of a player's conscience being bothered; it is altogether due to the fact that his pride is pricked.

The fact that vote stealing is practised with equanimity of conscience is due to the fact that vote stealing on a grand scale was introduced during reconstruction days by members of the very best Democratic families, who figured that if they couldn't outnumber the Republican Negroes at the polls they could at least outsmart them.

The trouble is, of course, that when the Negro was finally persuaded not to vote and he no longer was much of a problem in politics, the tradition of vote stealing and buying stuck and the Democrats of various factions have been practising their well-polished technique on each other. As a result, vote stealing has lost all of its glamour and romance.

Nowadays the incident which happened shortly after 1880 to

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old Colonel Weathers couldn't happen, to the sorrow of those who delight in such goings-on.

Colonel Weathers had been an officer in the Confederate Army, but he was a perverse old gentleman and persisted after the war in voting the Republican ticket. How he maintained the respect of the other white men in the vicinity of Montgomery is more than people who knew him then can say now, but respected he was.

When the Republican leaders in Montgomery saw that Whistler's beat, which lay in the country to the east of the city, was regularly going Democratic in elections regardless of the fact that the beat contained about 1,200 Republican Negroes to not more than 30 Democratic white men, they grew suspicious. Naturally they picked old Colonel Weathers for service as Republican watcher at that box, knowing well, as did the Democrats, that the election could be stolen only over Colonel Weathers' dead body.

The Democrats in the Whistler beat heard that Colonel Weathers was going to watch the voting and were more or less perturbed. They held a council of war forthwith.

The voting was to take place in a sizable barn on the Meigs place. The barn was piled high with hay and corn shucks. The night before the election, five of the young Democrats who were to serve as officials at the box went to the barn and hollowed out a neat hole in the shucks which was invisible from the front. In the hole they decided to put Captain Will Jackson whose nerves were very steady. With the Captain was to go a box, a duplicate of that in which the votes were to be cast, and some 1,500 blank ballots, duplicates of those which would be cast in the regular box.

Morning came and Captain Jackson slipped under the shucks with his box and ballots, a couple of pencils, and refreshments. An hour later the first of the young Democrats walked in, a little later along came the Colonel and the rest of the Democrats—and the voting began.

As each of the Negroes voted the clerk sang out his name in a loud clear voice. Under the shucks the Captain would mark a ballot for Democracy and put it into his box. By three in the afternoon, nearly a thousand Negroes had voted and nothing had happened to upset Colonel Weathers.

The odor of barbecued pork just then floated in through the door. "Damn if I ain't gettin' hungry," one of the Democrats said. and stood up to stretch. "I think we ought to go out and eat us some of that barbecue."

All of the Democrats were hungry, it turned out, and they got up and started toward the door.

"Colonel," they said, "we'd be glad to have you come along and eat with us. We can lock the door and it's in plain sight of the table outside, or you can just stay here till we git back."

Colonel Weathers got up. "Boys," he said, "they been telling me how bad you all were out here but I ain't seen a better bunch of boys. I just as soon eat with you all as not."

Out marched the Colonel and the Democrats. With great care the Colonel locked the door and put the key in his pocket. And out from under the shucks crept Captain Jackson with his ballot box into which he placed a couple of hundred more Democratic votes for good measure. Having arranged things properly, the Captain took the real box back into the shucks with him.

In half an hour the Colonel and the boys were back. A few stragglers came in to vote and as five o'clock approached the boys began counting the votes. The teller called out the votes and the Colonel looked at every one. "Hmmm," he would say every hundred votes or so, "hmmm."

When the last vote had been tallied the Colonel looked at the impressive Democratic total. He leaned back in his chair.

"Wal," he said, "either you boys are mighty smart or them niggers are the God damndest bunch of lying sons of bitches ever I saw!"

COMMENCEMENT AT CRIBMORE

by WILLIAM NEWBERRY

WORDY Professors, Fellow Graduates, and Innocent By-standers:—

Robed in black though we are, we have assembled to celebrate a blessed event. Four years' indiscriminate dissemination of unrelated facts, disjointed ideas and incoherent ideals in the womb of moral and intellectual chaos have fructified at last. The culmination of this lengthy period of gestation reposes before you: Fifty-seven Bachelors of Arts, the majority of whom are neither celibate nor artistic.

An impartial diagnosis of our case histories reveals many interesting and illuminating data. During our academic careers, we have taken volumes of notes, of which not the tenth part were note-worthy. For each of us, a ceaseless stream of lectures has gone into one ear but never come out the other, presumably having fallen by the wayside into some unplumbed abyss. Lured by the legend of enduring contacts made at college, as exemplified by the case of the poor but honest minister's son who met and married the vivid but virtuous daughter of the Oil-king, we have made numerous contacts, the majority of which will in all probability prove more intimate than enduring.

We are also obligated to point with pride to the contributions of each of our academic departments. All of us have been exposed to required courses in foreign languages, yet could not read the headlines of a trans-Atlantic newspaper. We have engaged in casual encounters with courses in economics, yet could not be trusted to distinguish with clarity between a corporate and a corpulent body. Not one of the dates imposed upon us by the history department has made half the impression left by those of the extra-curricular variety. All of us presumably have mastered the mother tongue, without abandoning a persistent predisposition to massacre it. We have been drilled in analyzing various defunct and moribund literatures, without losing our preference for the sections of the diurnal publications mistakenly called comic. We have dabbled in the laboratory, and have acquired a speaking acquaintance with a smattering of technical terms, without once appreciating the scientific approach to the problems of life and the vexations of the universe. We have meddled and muddled with mathematics, yet still believe that two can acquire the economic necessities of existence as inexpensively as one. In Bible class we have made up for many a lost hour of sleep, yet still believe that the wisest man in the world would commit three hundred matrimonial errors in succession. Half of us have perspired through long hours in the home economics laboratory, yet know more about jouncing a cocktail shaker than about baking biscuits.

But think not, fond parents and patrons, that our academic accomplishments are our proudest boast. It is in the field of character development that our achievements have been most notorious. We have participated in many a moral victory in the athletic arena, crammed for examinations through many a compulsory chapel hour, and been confined to the Christian atmosphere of the campus for sundry offenses, yet we have never ceased playing the ponies when the dread hour of finals arrived.

In conclusion, the contributions of our wide range of extra-curricular activities must not be ignored. Indeed the professions in the future will be filled with graduates who gained their experience in the halls of dear old Cribmore. Where could our future politicians have learned to stuff the ballot box more adroitly? Where could our future journalists have practised manufacturing more blatant scandal? Where could our future taxi-drivers have spent more hours in one-arming driving? Where could our future bartenders

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have acquired a wider experimental background? Where could our future school-teachers have learned to evade vital issues more dextrously? Where could our future voters have learned to avoid more assiduously debates on questions of public welfare? Where could our future ministers have acquired a more solemn brand of hypocrisy? Finally, where could our future gold-diggers have discovered more concerning men and their manners than in eliciting grades and giggles from our gallant professors?

Fellow graduates, in bidding you farewell, I wish to assure you that there is nothing more our Alma Mater could have done to us. With streaming eyes turned toward the scene of so many hilarious hours as we face with wreathed smiles the joyous future, let us go forth, O friends and comrades, into the huge and hustling world to take our station at the gasoline pump or in the bread-line.

THE BLACK FUTURE OF POETRY

by BOB BROWN

INDIGENOUS American poetry has ever been bucolic. Its theme song remains "When the frost was on the pumpkin."

Our earliest poets wrote almost exclusively about New England crops, colts and simple farm delights, even as Robert Frost does today.

An unknown pioneer poet rang the bell in 1630 with:

> "Our pumpkins and parsnips are common supplies,
> We have pumpkins at morning and pumpkins at noon;
> If it wasn't for pumpkins we should be undone."

Our real poetry is like that. It stems from rutabagas, up through Ann Bradstreet and Whitman, to present day Negro rhythms. Will Carleton's "Farm Ballads" steadied our poetic standards for half a century. There was a plush-bound copy on every parlor table, and rivulets of tears sluiced down Grandpap's apple cheeks when Grandma read aloud, in a choking voice, "Over the Hills to the Poor House."

Up to ten years ago, chiefly bees, flowers and barefoot boy pathos touched our sturdy national heart. Thoreau, Whittier and Walt Whitman held the golden key. Emily Dickinson too. Our Angelus was eloquently chimed by Edwin Markham in "The Man With a Hoe." Riley's "Little Willie" poems were just the thing.

The "Sweet Singer of Michigan" personified our people, in homey, compelling couplets like:

> When I go to a restaurant and order soup,
> Your reflection comes to its surface and beckons me to
> leave a group.

Eddie Guest's work has never been too citified, slick and sophisticated for us. Our taste has always called for ruddy rustic heart throbs wrung from the people. Harry Kemp almost made the grade with an early epic of the threshing machine; Stephen Benét nearly caught it in "John Brown's Body."

But a sudden change came over the public about ten years ago, and since then it has called for something even more elemental, truly primitive. Torch songs about long, thin, disconnected gals that make the preachers lay their Bibles down. "High Brown's Body" in place of "John Brown's Body."

Only Negro poets can adequately supply that. Our Negro poets hit the mark. They wind America's phonograph, make its radio hum with whispered blues, Minnie the Moochers, crooners and Way Down South in Dixies.

The past decade is marked by the discovery of the Negro in art and literature. The publication of Negro poetry has bounded from somewhere near zero up to 90% in volume, while the issuance of white race poetry, except uncommercially in myriads of little reviews, has gone down in about the same proportion. Negro poetry is commercially successful, while pale-face poetry, beyond our handful of established Robinsons, Millays and Frosts, is a drug on a drugged market.

Poetry publishers have gone definitely negroid. If the issue of ebony dithyrambs continues at its present rate, will any white poetry at all be published in the future?

Paul Laurence Dunbar was the exception of his dusky day. Today he is the rule. In the dingy Nineties, Dunbar was the only colored littérateur allowed to sing of the cabin in the cotton field. He had a monopoly on racial melancholy. For a generation afterward, Negro poetry was published only in *The Crisis*. Then Stieglitz discovered African primitive sculpture, and America became color conscious and longed to go nudist. The *Crisis* poets came into their own.

Being a people built up out of equal parts camp-meetings, cakewalks and corn-pone, we rose to the throaty throb of our Southern brother. We realized for the first time that our poetry is strictly of the soil and that the Negro, who has been nearest it for centuries, can best interpret for us. America became a poetic nigger heaven. Every colored youth of talent threw away the traditional hoe, became The Man with the Fountain Pen and began burning us up with blues. Weakly, our Nordic poets fought back the black invasion of sweet singing scarlet tanagers, whip-poor-wills and hoot owls from below the Mason and Dixon Line. White poets even stooped to pinning up their poems on the walls of Greenwich Village studios at ten cents a pin. They became sensational, got up Pregnancy Poem Contests and gave prizes down to Fourth Honorable Mentions. They published mauve pamphlets and got out their own poetry journal with the competitive title, "Blues." It was no go. The Negro had captured and is still holding our national rhythm. The white poet ungracefully caved in.

Today there is no hope for the white race of rhymsters, rhythm-makers and poetic ribbon-counter clerks. Time was, when it was the Negro who wanted to pass as white, but Carl Van Vechten and other African primitives put an end to all that.

In poetry circles it is at present more of a distinction to be black than white. These days, Negro poets alone are welcome in publishers' offices. The poor white must stoop to subterfuge to get in. If he has a Southern voice he may get by the telephone girl; if he hasn't he must acquire one by mimicking Amos 'n' Andy. Otherwise, he is lost.

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